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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 PORT AU PRINCE 001298

SIPDIS

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E.O. 12958: DECL: 09/06/2018  
TAGS: [PREL](#) [PGOV](#)  
SUBJECT: AIRPORT SECURITY AGENTS MEET WITH TSA

REF: PORT AU PRINCE 1069

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Classified By: Ambassador Janet A. Sanderson for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d)  
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11. (SBU) The TSA Representative for the Caribbean chaired a meeting on August 28 with Haitian national airport and aviation officials to discuss security implications of the recent assumption of certain airport security functions by the Haitian National Police. TSA's representative reviewed Haiti's National Aviation Policy and underscored that TSA has no objection to HNP (as opposed to a private security company) maintaining airport perimeter security, but the HNP must continue to function under the airport's Director General as the authority responsible for airport security. He urged the National Airport Authority (AAN), the Airport Office of Civil Aviation (OFNAC), and the HNP to achieve a more cooperative relationship, with improved information sharing and better training for HNP officers stationed at the airport. End Summary.

Aviation Policy Needs Updating  
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12. (SBU) Poloff attended a meeting at Toussaint L'Ouverture Airport on August 28 to discuss the airport's security. Meeting participants included TSA Representative for the Caribbean Allan Hurr, Airport Director General Lionel Isaac, OFNAC representatives Pierre Jean LeMarque and Bouchard Theramene, and HNP Commissar Justin Marc. Hurr said he had to discuss the security of the airport after the recent transfer of responsibility for airport perimeter security from a private security company to the HNP. He stressed that although TSA has no objection to the hand-over, Isaac as Director General should remain in charge of overall airport security and operations, while OFNAC should remain responsible for airport oversight.

13. (SBU) Hurr said that in light of the recent changes, Haiti's 2007 National Aviation Policy must be updated to reflect the new role and responsibilities of the HNP. He highlighted that OFNAC has responsibility for quality control and general oversight, while AAN manages and implements the Airport Security Program. The HNP is responsible for police functions such as responding to routine crime, surveillance

of persons who may pose a threat, and contingency planning in coordination with AAN.

#### HNP Officers Need More Training

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14. (SBU) Hurr further emphasized that the airport should not station officers on the perimeter of the airport who lack appropriate training. HNP must work together with the other airport agencies under Isaac's authority to ensure these officers have the training to respond effectively to an emergency and that all duties and responsibilities are clear and transparent. Commissar Marc agreed that his officers need additional training, and promised to pursue this with Isaac immediately.

#### Improved Procedures for HNP Officers

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15. (SBU) Hurr said that his report on a tour of the airport perimeter August 25 with TSA representative Luc Petit contained mixed conclusions. There were sufficient HNP officers at each station; however, communication was sporadic and some officers lacked radios. He again suggested that AAN, OFNAC and HNP combine efforts to improve communication on the ground. Hurr stated furthermore that the HNP should report security-related events and employee departures and arrivals to Isaac through use of daily and nightly logs, which would be turned over to Isaac after an evaluation by OFNAC.

#### Drug Police Said to Interfere with Passenger Screening

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16. (C) Hurr stated that the resumption of stationing of officers from the BLTS (the HNP Drug Unit) at passenger screening stations posed a problem. He said these officers should not be posted near the X-ray machines because their presence diverted screeners' attention from their main job, the detection of explosives, not drugs. In the past, these BLTS agents have also intimidated the screeners such that they could not do their job effectively. Isaac suggested that BLTS agents could better carry out drug surveillance by positioning agents at the airline ticket counters, where they could use x-ray machines for screening.

#### Questions About Emergency Response Procedures

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17. (C) Isaac raised concerns about emergency response procedures to bomb threats and terrorism. He asked the following questions:

--What kind of assistance can the DG expect in response to bomb threats or terrorist threats, and from which agency?

--Could Emergency Ordinance Detection (EOD) specialists be brought from Guantanamo in the event of a terrorist or bomb threat?

--Whom at MINUSTAH would the airport contact if we need assistance in the event of an emergency?

Poloff told Isaac that Embassy would follow-up on these questions with MINUSTAH and the Embassy's Military Liaison Office.

#### Comment

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18. (C) The HNP's replacing a private security company as the body responsible for airport perimeter security (following intervention by the Port au Prince prosecutor, who later resigned under pressure from the National Palace (ref A) on

dubious legal grounds) raised the issue of whether overall airport security has been affected. The preliminary consensus is that it has not, but that all agencies with a stake in the airport acquire new habits of cooperation. Hurr told Poloff on the margins of the meeting that this was the first time in a long while that he had witnessed HNP, AAN, OFSAC and the airport DG meeting in a mutually cooperative spirit. It nevertheless remains imperative that all airport security entities continue to train personnel and update the National Aviation Policy quickly, lest TSA be forced to step in and urge immediate action to maintain the airport's TSA certification.

SANDERSON